



Information Sheet on Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Environmental Testing At NASA's Wallops Flight Facility

Current as of April 21, 2017

This is an update to recent information provided by NASA Wallops.

NASA, in collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies, is conducting testing of the facility's groundwater monitoring and drinking water wells for the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

Tests results of the Wallops drinking water and Town of Chincoteague's drinking water show that the water is safe to drink. These tests were done using an independent laboratory for analysis.

Initial tests of the Town of Chincoteague's drinking water detected the presence of PFAS at a level below the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lifetime Health Advisory (HA). According to the EPA, the Lifetime Health Advisory is set to be protective of all individuals, including the most sensitive populations.

NASA shared results of the sampling with local, state and federal officials and met with the Town of Chincoteague, EPA, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to discuss next steps.

During the meeting, NASA received concurrence from Chincoteague, EPA, VDEQ, and VDH to continue with additional monitoring and sampling, which includes the following:

- Sampling at the Town of Chincoteague's wells on the east boundary of the facility
- Ongoing sampling for PFAS of both the Wallops and Town of Chincoteague's finished drinking water
- Two sampling points on the west side of the facility near the 10-28 runway and one point on the south side of the facility to confirm whether or not PFAS is present in groundwater in these areas

Sampling will occur over the next several weeks.

NASA will continue to use an independent lab to analyze samples.

NASA will share results and will continue to communicate with officials from the Town of Chincoteague, EPA, VDEQ, and VDH to discuss results and develop any additional actions.

Background

PFAS are manmade compounds used extensively in a wide variety of consumer products and are also related to the use of a firefighting foam.

At a former firefighter training area located on the north-central side of the Wallops mainbase, firefighters conducted training with a commonly-used firefighting foam that contains PFAS compounds.

The Environmental Protection Agency has not established drinking water standards for PFAS. While not regulated, the EPA has been increasingly sampling for PFAS. Since 2013, the EPA has detected PFAS in numerous public water supplies serving 16 million people across 33 states. In May 2016, the EPA issued updated lifetime Health Advisory (HA) level guidelines for two PFAS compounds, perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

More on the EPA's HA here: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-06/documents/drinkingwaterhealthadvisories_pfoa_pfos_updated_5.31.16.pdf.

For more information on PFAS, see:

https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfc/docs/pfas_fact_sheet.pdf

NASA will continue to provide updates to officials and the public.

For more information, contact Jeremy Eggers, Wallops Office of Communications, at 757-824-2958 or via email at Jeremy.l.eggers@nasa.gov.